

PLAYS FOR LITTLE CHAPS



ALFRED J. WATERHOUSE

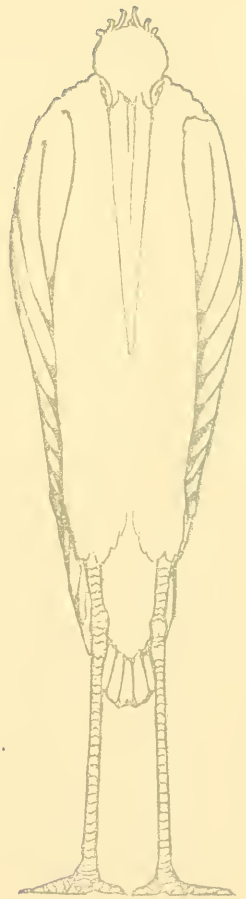


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LAYS *for* LITTLE CHAPS





"THE LITTLE CHAP THAT RUNS THE HOUSE"

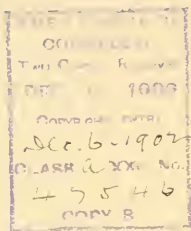
Lays for Little Chaps

BY

ALFRED JAMES WATERHOUSE




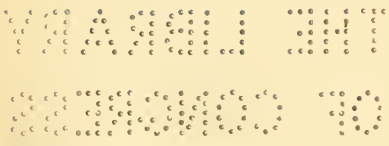
NEW YORK · NEW AMSTERDAM
BOOK COMPANY · PUBLISHERS · MCMII



PS3545
.A79L3
1902

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Published November, 1902

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UNIVERSITY PRESS · JOHN WILSON
AND SON · CAMBRIDGE, U. S. A.

To Ruth and Dorothy

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THE LITTLE CHAP THAT RUNS
THE HOUSE

THE little chap that runs the house,
He is a sight to see ;
His face is as a saucer round ;
He reacheth to my knee.
But when he shouts at me, “ Hey, there ! ”
I know 't were wisdom to beware.

The little chap that runs the house
Hath noises many score,
And when I think I've learned them all
He springeth several more.
Yells, whoops and shrieks to Bedlam run —
He sayeth only : “ My ! What fun ! ”

Sometimes when I awhile would write
In some secluded spot

Lays for Little Chaps

A-sudden Panic's frenzied might
Doth mingle in my plot:
With blare of trumpet, beat of drum,
"Say, ain't you glad 'cause I have come?"

The little chap that runs the house
Doth never pause to dream .
That "business" is a sacred word
In man's sagacious scheme.
"Up on your shoulder! Take me! Do!"
We march to shriek and mad halloo.

The little chap that runs the house
When daylight all hath fled
Doth rub his sleepy eyes, and say:
"I fink I'll go to bed."
Then by his mother kneeleth he,
And angels heed his baby plea.

The little chap that runs the house,
His noise is dear to me,
For shriek and shout and loud
halloo
Are tuned to Heaven's key;
And so I say: "God give him
joy,
And heed his way, my little
boy."





CHARLIE JONES'
BAD LUCK

*As discussed by
little Willie*

I DON'T care if Charlie Jones
Is better 'an I be ;
An' I don't care if teacher says
He's smart 'long side er me ;
An' I don't care, w'en vis'tors come,
If she on him does call ;
He ain't got measles, like I have —
He don't have luck at all.

He never had the whoopin' cough,
Ner mos' cut off his thumb,
Ner ever fell an' broke his leg
An' had a doctor come.
He hardly ever stubs his toe,
An' if he does, he'll bawl !
There 's nuthin' special comes to him —
He don't have luck at all.

Lays for Little Chaps

An' I don't care if he can say
More tex's an' things 'an I;
He never burnt both hands to once
'Long 'bout the Fo'th July.
He never had the chicken pox,
Ner p'isen oak — las' Fall!
He can't be proud o' nuthin' much —
He don't have luck at all.





A PASSENGER FROM PHANTOM
LAND

A PASSENGER came from Phantom
Land ;
Ho and oho ! but a sight was he !
With a voice that was merely a loud demand
For something to eat or to drink maybe.
A passenger came from Phantom Land ;
A queerer and quainter you never have seen,
With a mite of a foot and a bit of a hand,
And I vow he was only a crying machine.

But it's ho and oho ! for the passengers all !
Pudgy and funny and dimpled
and small,
Who know just enough for their
mamas to call —
Here's to them, wherever
they be !



Lays for Little Chaps

A passenger came from Phantom Land,
His baggage forgotten and left behind.
He had n't a stocking in which to stand,
And he could n't have stood if he had, you
mind.



He had n't a coat to his blessed name ;
He had n't a garment ; he had n't a thing.
But, worse than all that — and I count it a
shame —
His hair and his teeth he 'd forgotten to bring.

But it's ho and oho ! for the passengers queer !
The little wee despots, we welcome them here.
The greater the tyrant, the more he is dear —
Here's to them, wherever they be !

A passenger came from Phantom Land.
The customs officials all passed him by.
He had n't a thing they could touch on hand ;
There's never a tax on an animate cry.

A Passenger from Phantom Land

But one there was greeted him, greeted him
here

With a kiss and a prayer that the Father
heard,

For these little passengers still are dear,

Though pudgy and useless and quaint and
absurd.

So it's ho and oho! for the passengers wee!

They are dear unto you, and they're dear unto
me.

Each care that they bear is a blessing, you see —

God bless them, wherever they be!





OUR HUSHABY SONG

I SING to my baby a hushaby song ;
She sings to her dolly a lullaby too.
“Oh, hush you,” I sing, “for the sleep
angels throng,”
But she singeth only, “Er-goo” and “Er-
goo.”
“Oh, hush you, my dearie.
Through all of the day
The little feet weary,
Wherever they stray.
Now white angels gather
In Sleep Country fair,
Each sent by the Father
To welcome you there.”

Our Hushaby Song

So lowly I sing the even shades through,
While she singeth only, "Er-goo" and "Er-
goo."

She sings to her baby; I sing to my own.

But she singeth sweeter whate'er I may do,
For in all of life's music there soundeth no
tone

So sweet as a bairnie's contented "Er-goo."

"So hush you, my dearie.

The little stars peep,

With eyes that are cheery,

To guard you, asleep;

And peeping, down-peeping,

Full lowly they say:

'O'er Sleep's river creeping,

One cometh this way.'

One murmured "Er-goo;"

the elves nearer

ereep,

And baby and dolly have

both gone to sleep.





THE BABY IN PANTS

HE'S a little bit of baby,
'Bout as tall as pa's silk hat,
An' as chubby as a cherub,
An' you know how chubby 's that.
Yistuday my ma, she said she
Guessed she 'd put him into pants ;
An' all other sights that 's funny, —
They ain't more 'n a circumstance.

Uncle William, he jus' hollered,
'Cause the baby looked so queer ;
An' my ma she jus' kep' sayin' :
" B'ess him ! pootsy-wootsy dear."
But my pa, he wan't so tickled —
Anyways, he kep' it hid —
Fer he said : " Fer lan's sake, Ellen,
W'at you done to that there kid ?"

The Baby in Pants

But the baby, he stood wond'rin',
Kind o' smilin' in the sun,
An' it seemed the brightest sunbeams
Come to kiss the little one.
An' he looked so sweet an' cumin',
Standin' where the sunrays glance,
That my pa says: "I guess, Ellen,
That we 'll let him keep them pants."





THE LAND OF THREE FEET HIGH

IN the Land of Three Feet High
Very many wonders be ;
Castles reaching to the sky,
Elfin-haunts in vale or lea ;
Fairy boats that ceaseless ply
O'er the Sea of Three Feet High.

There are giants, very tall ;
Goblins playing in the dell ;
Brownies, queerest folk of all ;
More, ah, more than I can tell ;
And I sometimes pause and sigh
For the Land of Three Feet High.

The Land of Three Feet High

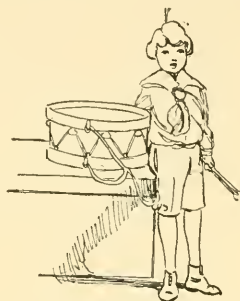
And the people, who are they ?

Lads and lasses whom we know ;
But beside them, where they stray,

We may never, never go.

We have wandered, you and I,
From the Land of Three Feet High.





LITTLE WILLIE'S CHRISTMAS WISH

SANTA CLAUS, he brought me a great
big drum.

Orto hear me play it! Bet I make it
hum!

Brought my cousin Charlie an engine with a
bell

An' a reg'lar whistle that'll almos' yell.

Brought the other fellers nices' kind o' toys;

Hootin', tootin', shootin', makin' lots o' noise.

But when the fellers visit me — they do mos'
ev'ry day —

It's orful diserpointin' what my pa'll say.

 Toot, hoot, toot!

 Bang, slam, bang!

Little Willie's Christmas Wish

Wile pa gits red an' redder, an' says: "Well,
I'll be hang!"

But ma says: "William Johnson! Such lan-
guage to employ!

Have you forgotten that you once was jus' a
little boy?"

An' pa says: "S'posin' if I was, this fac' is no
less true:

I did n't have a license then to be a pirit, too."

What's the use of Santa Claus if boys can't
play

Without their pas a-gittin' red an' talkin' in
that way?

Never was no fellers 'at are better 'an we be;
Jus' a-playin' with the things he brought to
them an' me.

Tootin' with the whistle, shootin' with the gun,
Blowin' of the trumpet, havin' lots of fun.

Shootin' at a targit, shot my pa instead —

Orful diserpointin' what my pa then said.

Ting-a-ling-ling!

Toot-er-toot-too!

Till pa says: "Oh, blame Santa Claus! I guess
'at that 'll do!"

Lays for Little Chaps

An' he ketches me an' Charlie an' yanks us to
the door ;
An' the fellers say they 'll never come to play
with me no more.
An' that is why I 'm wishin', an' so I told my
ma,
That Santa Claus 'll bring me nex' a bran' new
pa.





W'EN I AM
GROWED UP

W'EN I am growed up an' am quite a
big man
I 'll go with a cirkis, I guess, ef I
can —

An' I proberbly can — an' I s'pose 'at I 'll be
A clown er a ringmaster gorjus to see,
An' I 'll act in a tent on mos' ev'ry night,
An' the folks 'll say, "Goodness! 'at feller's a
sight!"

An' they 'll yell an' hurrah jus' es loud es they
can —

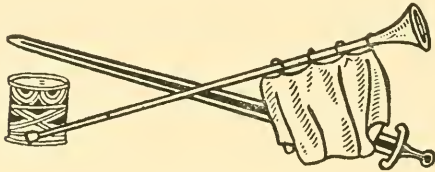
W'en I am growed up an' am quite a big man.

W'en I am growed up an' am quite — I don'
know,

Fer sometimes I think 'at to sea I will go,

Lays for Little Chaps

An' I'll be a bold pirit, to sail the seas through
An' capture the ships as the pirts all do,
Er a street-car conductor, er brave engineer,
Er runnin' a candy-store mos' of the year —
But ma says to make me a preacher's her plan,
W'en I am growed up an' am quite a big man.



Saint Santa Claus



SAINT SANTA CLAUS

I ASKED a little girl one day
Which saint she liked the best ;
“ Saint Peter, or Saint Paul ? ” I said,
“ Or which one of the rest ? ”

And straight she answered me : “ Zere ’s one
• I likes the best, betoz ” —

Faith ! how I longed to kiss her then ! —

“ He ’s dood — Saint Santy Tlaus. ”

Ho, all ye ones whose heads and hearts

Have frosted with the years ;

So frozen that for childish faith

You ’ve nothing left save sneers,

Lays for Little Chaps

You 'd better let your hearts thaw out
By genial nature's laws,
For she was right, the little maid :
"He's dood — Saint Santy Tlaus."





THE REMARKABLE TALE
OF MISS KITTY CAT

LITTLE Miss Kitty Cat climbed my
knee
Last night as I sat by the fire,
And her eyes were as green as green could be,
(Oh, she was a wonderful sight to see!)
And her hairs were just like wire,
This thin and singular wire.

But I stroked her gently, I stroked her long,
Till her eyes grew yellow again,
And she sung me the most *remarkable* song;
The tune went just pur-r-ring and pur-r-ring
along
Till she 'd sung it thrice over, and then
She sung it all over again.

Lays for Little Chaps

And I wrote down that song just as fast as I
could,

For I knew that you wanted to hear,
And I said to myself that you certainly should —
That is, if you're 'specially, 'specially good —

And here is its story. Dear! Dear!

A curious story, 't is clear.

“It was only this evening” — so Kitty Cat
sung —

“That I walked in a wood where bad doggies
hung

By their necks to the limbs of the trees,

And I laughed as they swung in the breeze ;
For I've always insisted — 't was plain unto
me —

That the place for a dog is the limb of a tree,

The limb of a very tall tree,

Where good little kitties can see

How their bow-wows are choked, unless they're
of tin,

And that cannot be, for they'd have whistles in,
And the dogs when they barked would just
whistle instead,

And I never have heard them ; no, never !” she
said,

The Remarkable Tale of Miss Kitty Cat

“And I really don’t think it can be;
Do you?” said Miss Kitty to me,
“But I *wish* I could see such a tree,
A tree,
Such a wonderful, *beautiful* tree.

“There were bright yellow birds in that marvellous wood,
And they flew to my feet from the trees, as they should,
And, ‘Eat us; come eat us,’ they sung;
(I’m acquainted, you know, with their tongue)
And the mice all came running as fast as they could,
Saying, ‘Please eat us *first*,’ and I told them I would;
I surely and certainly would,
For mice are especially good.
Then the mice brought me forks, and the birds brought me knives,
And they all said at once, ‘Please commence on our wives,
For we love them *so* much, and we’d give you our best,
And perhaps when they’re eaten you’ll want a long rest.

Lays for Little Chaps

Oh, they 're *much* better eating, you see,
Said those dear, loving husbands to me.
Oh, I wish that such blisses could be,
 Could be,
Could *surely* and *certainly* be!

“ But, while I was thinking of eating a
 mouse,
I happened to notice a queer little house,
 And out came a man with a gun,
 And he said, ‘ I will limit your fun,’
And he shot a queer bullet made out of Dutch
 cheese,
And I shouted, ‘ *Don't*, Mister! Oh, *don't*, if
 you *please* !
 Oh, I hope you will certainly please.
 Can't you see I am weak in the knees? ’
But the queer bullet chased me eight times
 'round a tree,
And 't was gaining quite fast, as I could n't but
 see,
And I wanted to pray, but ‘ Now I lay me ’
Did n't seem quite appropriate then, don't you
 see?
And a flutter got into my heart,
And it seemed that it surely must part;

The Remarkable Tale of Miss Kitty Cat

And I *waked* with a terrible start,
A start,
And I jumped in your lap with that start.”
So that is the story Miss Kitty Cat sung,
As she lay on my lap last night,
And, as I'm well acquainted with Kitty Cat's
tongue,
I know I have written it right ;
And I've written it all for a wee little one
Who is dear, oh, so dear unto me,
And if it shall please her, now that it is done,
I'll be amply repaid, don't you see ?
And there's one little thing that I almost forgot :
Do you see what the moral is, dears ?
Did you know what I meant, though you'd
much rather not,
When I wrote of Miss Kitty Cat's fears ?
Did you see ? You did not ? Well, perhaps
it's not queer,
Though it well may appear
so to many,
For to me it is really remark-
ably clear
That the story, you know,
has n't any.





WHEN THE BABY CAME

WHEN the baby came that the white
stork brings,
Such a queer little baby was he,
The quaintest and cutest of laughable things,
He was really a marvel to see,
For he puckered his brow, and he twisted his
eyes,
And first he looked simple and then he looked
wise,
And the way that he wailed would cause you
surprise.
It was surely surprising to me,
You see ;
It was more than surprising to me.

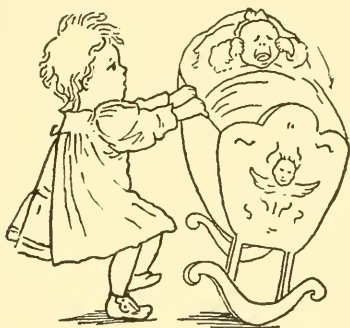
When the Baby Came

When the baby came 't was his grandna said :

“ I'm sure that he looks like his ma ; ”

But his Aunt Angelina insisted, instead :

“ I'm certain he favors his pa.”



But the baby he wriggled his little red toes,
And he wailed that he wanted to get in his
clothes,

Which was perfectly proper, as you may suppose,
For he 'd left all his clothing afar
In the star

Where all of the wee babies are.

When the baby came there was somebody said :

“ May the Father my little one bless ; ”

And a kiss, like a blessing, fell soft on the head
Of the darling she yearned to caress.

Lays for Little Chaps

But the baby he heeded nor blessing nor prayer,
As he blinked at the light with a meaningless
stare ;

Yet I'm sure the petition was registered where
There is One who is able to bless,
And I guess
That in answer He stooped to caress.



THE BABY'S REMARKS

THERE is nobody knows the things I
think ;

There is nobody knows, I guess,
As I lie in my crib and blink and blink,
With my wee little brain a-kink, a-kink
With the notions I can't express.

There is nobody knows what I try to say,
As I lie in my crib and talk this way :

Goo, goo, goo, goo —

A toe is a thing to eat —

Goo, goo, goo, goo —

It's really remarkably sweet.

Lays for Little Chaps

The nurse took a sticking thing one day
And pinned a jacket to me.
I am not a talker, but I do say
That I made them take it away, away,
For I cried, and I cried, you see.
There is nobody knows what I say, no doubt,
But I notice they got that sticker out.

Goo, goo, goo, goo —
I guess that my head I'll bump —
Goo, goo, goo, goo —
When I do, watch the big nurse jump.



A Hard, Hard Citizen



A HARD,
HARD CITIZEN

YOU 'RE a hard, hard citizen." So I
said,

And he freely admitted that it was so.
"You turned my mucilage into the bed,
But rubbed some part in your hair, you know.
You hid my slippers and then forgot,
And the place where you put them still
puzzles me.

You 're a hard, hard citizen, are you not?"
And he smiled as he answered, "Yeth, I be."

"The faucet you turned of the coal-oil can,
Till the floor was drenched by the oily flow;
And you chuckled in glee as the liquid ran.
Now answer me straightly: Is n't it so?"
But the criminal neither did shudder nor shrink,
As he murmured, "A 'tory p'ease tell to me."
"You 're a hard, hard citizen, don't you think?"
I said, and he smiled as he said, "I be."

Lays for Little Chaps

“Your grammar is faulty I’d fain suggest,”
I said to the criminal on my knees;
“It would not endure the least critical test;”
And he answered, “Now tell me a ’tory,
p’ease.”

Now what could I do? — I leave it to you —
For he’s callous in guilt as the worst of the
lot,
And that he seems hardened is dreadfully
true —

So I told him the story. Now, would you not?

I told him the story, and then I said:
“You’re a hard, hard citizen, one can see,”
And he answered, “I be,” and then he pled:
“Now p’ease, won’t oo tell ’nuzzer ’tory to
me?”

Oh, I guess that my discipline’s sadly at fault,
For I told him a story, the peace to keep,
And he murmured low, when I seemed to halt:
“Now tell me anuzzer,” then went to sleep.





THE LAND OF THE HUSHABY
KING

OH, safely afloat in a wonderful boat,
From over the Sundown Sea,
When the tide swings slow and the
breeze chants low

In marvellous minstrelsy,
There cometh, there cometh the Hushaby King,
And dreams are the elves that creep
Close, close by his side on the Sundown tide,
As he singeth my babe to sleep :

“By, oh! — by, by, — we shall go sailing,
sailing ;
Swing low, swing high, over the Dream Sea
trailing,

Lays for Little Chaps

With elves of the Dreamland about us a-wing."
This is the song of the Hushaby King.

Oh, little blue eyes, the stars in the skies
Of the Dreamland are strangely aglow,
And the moon is the queen of a fairyland
scene,

To watch o'er the children below ;
And your boat 'mid the islands swings lazily
o'er

Where the mermaids in happiness throng,
And, down where they dwell, 'neath the surge
and the swell,

They are singing a lullaby song :

"Sleep, dear ; sleep, sleep, rocked on the rest-
tide billow ;

While near creep, creep, elves to thy downy
pillow ;

You shall be soothed by the flutter of wings."
This is the song that the mermaiden sings.

Oh, the far-away strand of the Hushaby Land

Your little white feet shall press,
And the birds of the air shall welcome you
there

To blisses no mortal may guess.

The Land of the Hushaby King

On wonderful trees shall the candy-fruit grow ;
Plum cake to the bushes shall cling ;
And no one shall cry, "Don't touch them!
My, my !"
For the dream-fairies ever will sing :

"Yours all, yours, dear ; all to be had for the
taking ;
Babes small, babes queer, just give the trees a
good shaking ;
For candy in Dreamland 's a very good thing."
This is the song that the white fairies sing.

Oh, far-away strand of the Hushaby Land,
If I could but go, could go
Where my baby doth float in the Lullaby-boat ;
If I could her rapture know
As she laughs in a dream that comes through
the night,
A dream of the elfins at play !
But she drifteth from me o'er the Hushaby Sea,
And aye to myself I say :

"By, oh !— by, by,— bonnie one, drifting,
drifting ;
Swing low, swing high, safe on the sleep-tide
shifting."

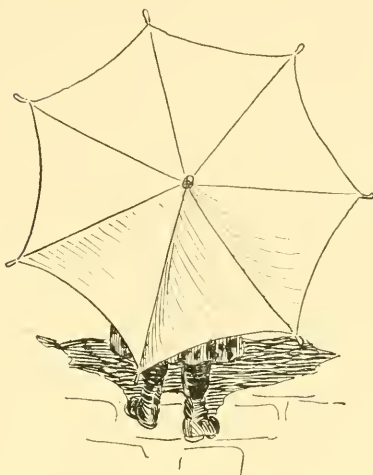
Lays for Little Chaps

And my heart doth reply, though closer I
cling :

“She is safe in the arms of the Hushaby
King.”



A Very Queer Umbrella

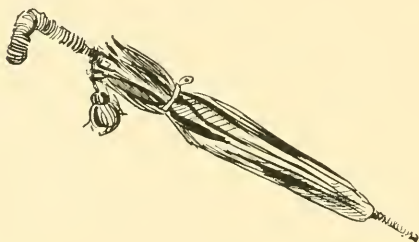


A VERY QUEER UMBRELLA

THIS very morn, upon the street,
A big umbrella I did meet.
At first I thought it walked alone,
Though such a thing I 'd never known;
And then — my pencil pardon begs —
I saw it walked on two plump legs.
So strange a sight filled me with awe,
And so I peeped beneath and saw —

Lays for Little Chaps

Saw two bright eyes that laughed to mine ;
Saw two cheeks, red as sun-born wine ;
A tiny mouth, just fit to kiss ;
Two dimples, Cupid's home of bliss ;
A forehead white, with locks of gold —
Ah, I am sad and gray and old,
And much I wished — my heart's so lone —
That queer umbrella were my own.





FELLOW CAME TO OUR HOUSE

FELLOW came to our house and said he
guessed he 'd stay ;
Dreadful inconvenient to let him have
his way —
Had no room for boarders, did n't have a bed —
Tried to argue with him, and this is what I
said :

“ Hey, there, little chap,
Come and visit me !
Humpty-bumpty, jumpty-dumpty
On your father's kneec !

Lays for Little Chaps

Have you made arrangements
To pay for board and cheer?
You 'll find them unavailing,
For we don't take boarders here."

But though my argument was sound, as I submit to you,
I think he meant that he would stay when he replied, "Goo-oo!"

Fellow came to our house, and some one talked this way:

"He's such a itty-witty that I guess we'll let him stay."

I could n't see the logic, but she pressed the tiny head

Still closer to her bosom, and this is what she said:

"Itty-bitty felly!

B'essed baby boy!

Come to b'ess his mamma,

Come to b'ing her joy!"

And then a tear down-starting

Her loving glances blurred;

But her lips kept moving, moving,

Though she did n't say a word.

Fellow Came to our House

And I knew a prayer she offered — and an
angel heard it, too ;
But the baby nestled closer and only said,
“Goo-oo!”





HOW THE BABIES RIDE

HERE'S the way the babies ride :
High-low, high-low,
Sitting their papa's foot astride —
High-low, high-low.

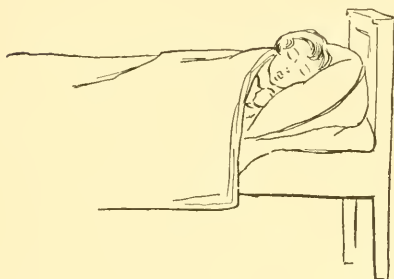
First they go up, and then they go down,
Shrieking with laughter, their fears to drown.
Oh, but the horse deserves renown ! —
High-low, high-low.

How the Babies Ride

Here 's the way the babies ride :

By-low, by-low,
Floating away on the Dream Sea tide —
By-low, by-low.

Safe where the Sleep-boat lazily swings,
Dreaming of beautiful, wonderful things,
Lulled by the song that Somebody sings :
By-low, by-low.





O'ER THE SEA OF DREAMS

O'ER the Sea of Dreams to the sweet
Dreamland —
Oh, little my love, come hither, I pray,
And place in my own your wee white hand,
And we will go sailing away, away,
Down a path of gold by the Isles of Rest,
O'er the slumbrous depths of the Sundown
Sea,
To the land of lands that we love the best,
Where dream angels whisper to you and to
me.

O'er the Sea of Dreams

O'er the Sea of Dreams — Oh, little my love,
Closer yet creep to this heart of mine,
While lowly the dream angels hover above
And there in God's meadows the star-blos-
soms shine.

Under your eyelids the visions shall creep —
Little one, little one, what shall they be?
Something to cause you to smile in your sleep,
Nestling yet closer and closer to me.

O'er the Sea of Dreams to the sweet Dream-
land —

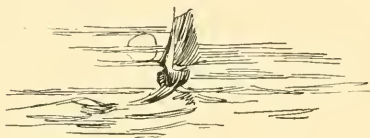
Oh, little my love, what dreams they must be!
Such dreams as a baby may understand;
Queer little fancies, as all must agree;
Little half notions, or foolish or wise;
Wee floating fragments of babyhood lore.
These are your dreams, as I sagely surmise —
Heigh-ho, my little one, what are mine more?

O'er the Sea of Dreams; and who's at the
helm,

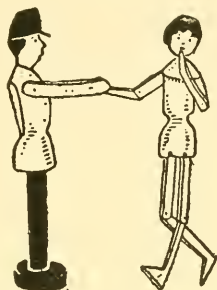
Oh, little my love, nor you nor I
May wisely tell, for the Sleep King's realm
Is hidden by mists from the passers-by.

Lays for Little Chaps

It is hidden by mists, yet myself I tell,
While your eyelids flutter like petals of
white,
The One who is guiding will guide her well —
So, little my love, good-night, good-night.



The Schoolgirl that I Hated



THE SCHOOLGIRL THAT I HATED

SOMETIMES when memory draws the
veil, and I look back a way
To where the sun was shining in my
happy, youthful day,
I catch the scent of lilacs as they blossomed by
our door,
And I hear the robins chirping as they used to
chirp of yore,
And the oriole is flitting like a ball of living fire,
And the river 's sort o' whispering just as though
't would never tire ;
And then, amid the faces that on memory's
screen I see,
Comes the schoolgirl that I hated when she sat
in front of me.

Lays for Little Chaps

Someway I see her plainly now in scanty dress
of blue,
With eyes in part coquettish and in part serene
and true ;
With curls that liked to catch the light and
twist it in and out,
And lips just right for kissing, if they were in-
clined to pout.
I knew that she was pretty, but I said she was
no good —
Though I could n't help admiring her ; no boy
that 's human could —
But she made up faces at me, and she could a
vixen be,
The schoolgirl that I hated when she sat in front
of me.

She would n't play at marbles, and she could n't
play at ball,
And I often intimated that she was no good at
all.
I dropped a cricket down her back in cheerful,
boyish way,
And she yelled first ; then I yelled next, when
teacher was to pay.
She would n't "coon" a melon, though I asked
her oftentimes,

The Schoolgirl that I Hated

And she ridiculed my first attempts at poor and
broken rhymes.

Oh, she was a thorough failure, as any boy can
see,

The schoolgirl that I hated when she sat in front
of me.

She beat me at the lessons that we found within
our books,

And when she went above me all scornful were
her looks ;

But when the teacher whipped me I saw her
cry one day,

And I said that " girls is better
than what some fellers
say ; "

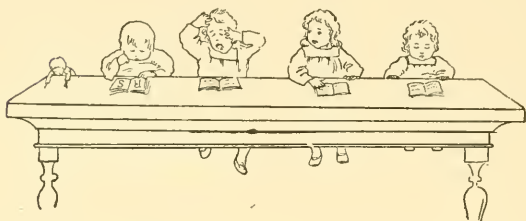
And I sort of half forgave her for
her lack of hardihood,

Though I even then insisted that
she really was no good ;

But times have changed since
then, for I — I 'm mar-
ried, don't you see,

To the schoolgirl that I hated
when she sat in front of
me.





MY ORFUL CROSS-EYED TEACHER

ONE time I had a teacher — I've had
them every kind,
But this partic'lar teacher was dis-
tractin' to my mind.
Of course all sorts of teachers is disturbin' to a
boy,
For they 're always interferin' when he wants to
have some joy ;
But this partic'lar teacher he was worsen than
the rest,
For there wain't no way of figgerin' on the im-
pulse in his breast,
An' when he looked mos' pensive, then he'd
light upon me hot,
My orful cross-eyed teacher what I never have
forgot.

My Orful Cross-eyed Teacher

There wa'n't no way accountin' for the vag'ries
of that man ;
There wa'n't no cunnin' little boy could quite
foresee his plan.
With his eyes both turned on heaven, he 'd seem
about to pray,
An' then you 'd best go mighty slow ; he 'd
prob'ly come your way ;
An' when his eyes seemed sot an' fixed some-
where about his toe,
Then, if you pinched another boy, you gen'ly
stood no show,
For he 'd prob'ly land upon you, or he would as
like as not,
This orful cross-eyed teacher what I never have
forgot.

One time that I remember, I remember very
well,
I wrote a note to Ethel Moore, my longin' love
to tell ;
An' the teacher he was gazin' on the far-off,
promised land,
So I fired that note at Ethel — well, it landed
in his hand ;
An' from the subsekent events I smarted fore
an' aft,

Lays for Little Chaps

An' my heart it also smarted when I noticed
Ethel luffed.

Oh, he wrenched my young affections an' he
jarred my spine a lot,
That orful cross-eyed teacher what I never have
forgot.

I throwed a wad at Charlie Jones when
teacher's eyes was east
Upon a hoss an' wagon that jus' then the win-
der passed.

Of the epersode that follered I am still ashamed
to tell,

For the teacher used his ruler, an' I — I used
a yell.

He was a diserpointin' chap, that pedergog, I
swear,

An' when he looked straight at a thing he
was n't lookin' there.

Because of him my youthful days was triberla-
tion-shot,

This orful cross-eyed teacher what I never have
forgot.

Oh, good an' noble little boys what still by
school are vexed,

My Orful Cross-eyed Teacher

If you will listen to my words I'll surely put
you "next,"
For one day a glad discovery sung a siren song
to me:
When the teacher looked right at me, what I
did he did n't see.
Oh, good an' noble little boys who watch the
master's nod,
When the cross-eyed teacher's lookin', then's
the time to fire the wad.
This grain of wisdom garnered served to cheer
my weary lot
With the orful cross-eyed teacher what I never
have forgot.





“I LOVE YOU EACH YEAR
BETTER ”

I 'M twelve years old to-day," she said,
I kissed and held her nearer,
For every year that onward fled
Had made her but the dearer.
“I'm growing quite a girl, you see,” —
My hand reached out to pet her —
“But then, you know, it seems to me
I love you each year better.”

“ I Love You Each Year Better ”

Now tell me, you who sup with care
As time grows old and older,
Could lips a sweeter message bear
When hearts with age turn colder?
So, little love, my soul shall pray,
As years our life-links fetter,
That I may always hear you say :
“ I love you each year better.”





HOW THE FLOWERS GROW

DO you know, darling, how pansies
grow?

God takes the tints of the sunset
glow,

The purple that floats in the mountain mist,
The blush of a maid by her love first kissed,
The blue that's asleep in the midday skies,
The brown that I love in my baby's eyes,
And He mingles them all in a flower; and so,
That is the way that the pansies grow.

Do you know, darling, how lilies grow?
God takes the soul of the beautiful snow
And moulds it into a chalice sweet,
Pure and wonderful, fair, complete;

How the Flowers Grow

Then He takes the gold of my baby's hair
And sets it amid the whiteness there,
As in night's white skies the bright stars glow ;
And that is the way that the lilies grow.

Do you know, darling, how roses grow ?
Ah, that is the strangest of all, I know ;
For they are the fairest of all things fair,
The one perfect blossom, beyond compare ;
Symbol of sweetness and all loveliness —
God wished His children to comfort and bless,
And He wrote the thought in a flower ; and so,
That is the way that the roses grow.





MY YOUTHFUL PANTS

COME back, come back, my youthful
pants ;
Come back, come back to me,
For nevermore by any chance
Your equal I shall see.
My mother made them ; I recall
How wondrous was their fit,
For I was some six sizes small
Into the things to "git."
She made them out of father's pants ;
The bosom was his size.

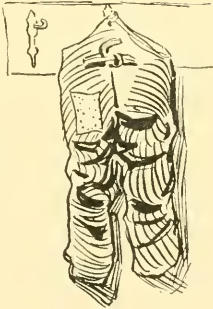
My Youthful Pants

The sight of me in them by chance
 Would fill you with surprise.
They hung straight from my shoulder-blade
 In folds beyond belief,
And when the eastern zephyrs played
 I had to take a reef.

And, oh, my youthful heart would swell
 Beneath the fearful brunt
Of feeling that no one could tell
 Which side I wore in front.
I still remember I would use
 The slack in carrying chips,
And when to raise it I did choose
 My face was in eclipse.

And all the little boys I met
 Would, joyous, 'round me dance
And cry in tones I can't forget :
 "Where did you git them
 pants?"

Oh, trousers dear of long ago ;
 Oh, panties wild and free,
Where you have gone I long
 to know !
 Come back, come back to
 me !





THE PEOPLE OF WONDER LAND

HAVE you ever heard tell of Wonder
Land,
Of the dear little, queer little, comical
band

That stumble and fumble and want to know
Where they are going and why they go?
They sit in our laps as the eve grows dark,
And they take the shape of a question mark,
For all that is written in face or eye
Is wholly expressed by the one word, "Why?"

"Why don't the sun burn up some day?"

"Why don't we fly, as the birdies do?"

"Why don't the chickens and hens eat hay?"

The People of Wonder Land

“Why do the scissors cut things in two?”
Such are the questions of Wonder Land,
Of its dear little, queer little, comical band.

These are the people of Wonder Land :
Queer little duffers as tall as your stand.
Wee little fellows who want to know
More than the wisest can tell, I trow ;
For the world is so big, and the world is so
 strange ;
Its paths are so hidden as onward they range,
That who dares to wonder — ’t is surely not I —
They look in amazement while questioning,
 “Why ?”

“Why are the stars put out in the day ?”
 “Who is it lights them when night comes
 down ?”

“Why don’t my ma have whiskers, I say ?”
 “Why are the houses all built in town ?”
These are the things they cannot understand,
The odd little people of Wonder Land.

Oh, little wee people of Wonder Land,
There ’s one thing I wish you could understand :
We folk who are older are not so wise
We can answer the questions in your dear eyes ;

Lays for Little Chaps

For really, you know — it is certainly true —
In the Country of Wonder we live with you ;
And if any can answer, 't is surely not I,
For I, too, am lost in the maze of " Why ? "

Why have I come from the mists of There ?
Why am I lost in the mists of Here ?
What is the gain in the burden we bear ?
What is the end that is glimmering near ?
And if these be not questions of Wonder Land,
The difference, my bairnies, I don't understand.



But Two Children



BUT TWO CHILDREN

THEY grow so weary, the little feet,
With their day-long, ceaseless
hurry ;

So when there cometh the even' sweet

When we bury the haunting worry,

She patters to me, and, wistful eyed,

She says : " I am finkin' maybe

You 'll hold me to s'leep, an' my dolly beside,

Because I am just oor baby."

Then I hold her a time, till her head droops low

And her soul creepeth out to the shadows ;

Lays for Little Chaps

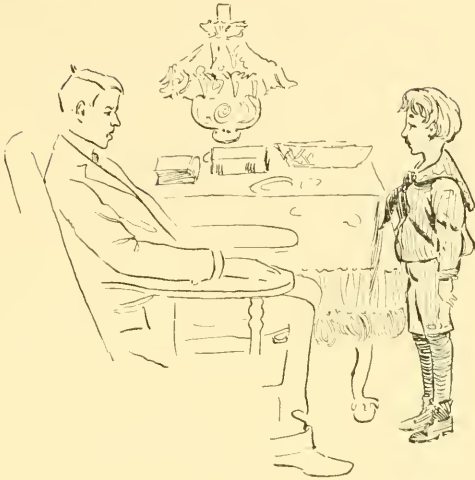
And she and her dolly together do go
To the Dreamland's star-flecked meadows ;
And, holding her so, I am glad to know
She is safe from the outside weather ;
And sometimes I say in a dreamy way :
" We are but two children together."

We are but two children. At even' we
Are wearied alike by the hurry,
And we long for the rest that shall set us free
From the daytime's care and worry.
And as she creeps to her father's arms,
Still holding her dolly near her,
And as I guard her from all alarms
And tenderly soothe and cheer her,

So do I turn, though I hold life's toys
Closer and closer unto me,
To the One who heedeth our woes and joys
For rest and for strength to renew me ;
And as my darling ne'er pleads in vain,
With soft baby prattle, " P'ease hold me,"
So do I whisper, through toil and through pain :
" The arms of His love do enfold me."



My Pa an' Ma



MY PA AN' MA

MY pa he is the wises' man, I s'pose,
you ever seen ;
He knows jus' why mos' all things
is, an' knows jus' what they mean.
He knows a heap more than my ma, 'cause he 's
a man, you see ;
He ain't a woman like she is, though tol'ble
good to me ;

Lays for Little Chaps

But when I ask him questions 'bout the things
I 'd like to know,
He sort o' scowls at me at firs', an' then he
answers so :

“ Do go away !
Don't bother me !
I 'm busy now !
Say, can't you see ? ”

But when I ask my ma, why, then she allers
ans'ers me.
I 'd learn a sight if she knew things almos' as
well as he.

When pa an' Mr. Jones sits down an' talk an
hour or less,
I wish the Presiden' could hear : he 'd learn
some things, I guess,
'Bout why the country ain't worth shucks, an'
why it orto be.
My pa he makes them things so clear that even
I can see.
He proves how ever'thing should be, an' how
it 's all amiss,
But when I ask him questions, then he answers
me like this :

My Pa an' Ma

“ Oh, run away,
You foolish lad!
Questions like yours
Will drive me mad!”

But ma, she tells me all she knows, an' that
much has to go.

I wish she knew as much as pa, fer then I judge
I'd know.

An' yet my questions all is 'bout the things boys
like to know.

I asked him once, I recollect', why things I drop
don't go

Up in the air instead of down, the way they
allers do ;

An' once I asked if God gits tired of holdin'
office, too,

The way men never does, pa says. I ask such
things as these,

But pa, he scowls an' says, although I ask him
with a “ please :”

“ Oh, run away!” —
An' then I'm fired —
“ Questions like yours
Do make me tired!”

Lays for Little Chaps

But ma, she ans'ers all she can, an' holds me to
her breast.

I guess my pa does know the mos', but ma, she
loves me best.





THE MOURNFUL TALE OF THE
SNEE ZEE FAMILIEE

THERE was a little yellow man whose
name it was Ah Cheu,
And every time that Mongol sneezed
he told his name to you.

This funny little yellow man had wedded Tish
Ah Chee,

And they, when certain time had passed, had
children one, two, three.

There was little Ah Cheu
And Tish Ah Tsu,

And the baby was named Ker Chee,
And their Uncle Ker Chawl
And his wife were all

Lays for Little Chaps

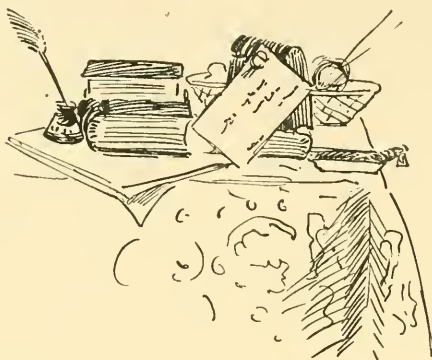
Of the Snee Zee fam-i-lee,
And when the mama stood and called her chil-
dren from the door,
You would laugh and laugh for an hour and a
half if never you laughed before.
“Ah Cheu,” she’d say in her feminine way,
“bring in the little Ker Chee,
And Tish Ah Tsu, bring him in, too, to the
Snee Zee fam-i-lee.”

Alas and alack! but my voice will crack as the
mournful tale I tell.
To that sweet little band in the Mongol land a
terrible fate befell.
On a summer day in a sportive way they called
one another all,
And over and o’er the names they bore they
would call and call and call.
They called Ah Cheu
And Tish Ah Tsu
And the baby Ker Chee, Ker Chee,
And their Uncle Ker Chawl,
They called them all,
Till they’re dead as the dead can be.
Ah Cheu was tough, and was used to snuff, so
he lived at his fate to scoff,

The Mournful Tale of the Sneezee Family

But the rest are dead, as I've heretofore said,
for their heads they were all sneezed off.
And this is the tale I have tried to wail of Ah
Cheu and his little Ker Chee
And Tish Ah Tsu and Ah Chee, too, of the Sneezee
Zee fam-i-lee.





“I’M PRAYING FOR YOU”

THERE ’S a quaint little letter that lies
on my stand,
A quaint little letter in old-fashioned
hand.

It is lacking somewhat in rhetorical grace,
And its capital letters at times lose their place.
It scarcely would bear the most critical test ;
Yet of all correspondence I hold it the best,
For it ends — ah, in love it was written all
through :

“ Remember, my boy, that I ’m praying for you.”

"I'm Praying for You"

"Remember, my boy" — Oh, an old boy am I,
With a head that shines back to the laugh of
the sky,

But to her I'm "my boy," and I always will be
Till the white angel steps 'twixt my mother and
me,

And longer; the love that has guarded my way
I know will not cease at the close of the day,
But will whisper me still from the infinite
blue:

"Remember, my boy, that I'm praying for
you."

"I'm praying for you" — God knows we all
need

That some heart of love to the Father shall
plead,

For our feet will but stumble on life's weary
way,

And we frequently find that we're sadly astray.

We say to our spirits, "Be brave and press on,"

But the spirit will faint, and the soul will grow
wan;

And then comes the message, our strength to
renew:

"Remember, my boy, that I'm praying for you."

Lays for Little Chaps

Remember! Oh, mother, I could not forget;
Still the dear, loving message my lashes will
 wet,
As I read it here written in old-fashioned hand
In the quaint little letter that lies on my stand;
And in fancy I see you, as often of old,
When love kissed your face into beauty untold,
As you knelt by my cot — With eyes strangely
 dim,
Your boy *does* remember you're praying for
 him.





THE LOVING MOTHER

SHE had been a loving mother and a very faithful wife ;
She had reared their seven children and had fitted them for life,
And through all their days of childhood she had taken little ease,
For whene'er she thought of resting, it was,
“ Mother, won't you please —

Lays for Little Chaps

“ Won’t you please to fix my bonnet ? ”

“ I say, mother, where ’s my hat ? ”

“ Put this piece of ribbon on it.”

“ Won’t you fix my doll like that ? ”

So, from six o’clock of mornings until ten
o’clock at night,

She hurried, as though resting were a thing that
was n’t right ;

And they said, the while she wearied in the
ceaseless toil and strife :

“ She is such a loving mother, and she ’s such a
faithful wife ! ”

Of course they loved her greatly, as bairns and
husband should ;

As she grew thin with slaving they would mur-
mur, “ She ’s so good ! ”

But when, at times, a moment just for rest she
fain would seize,

(Of course they were but thoughtless) it was,

“ Mother, won’t you please —

“ Won’t you mend this hole ? It ’s shocking.”

“ I say, Sarah, where ’s that pail ? ”

“ Won’t you please to fix this stocking ? ”

“ Can’t you make my boat a sail ? ”

The Loving Mother

And so, by mending, cooking, and a thousand
labors pressed,
She never quite could find the time to take the
needed rest.
But e'er, as she grew thinner in the constant toil
of life,
They said: "She's *such* a mother, and she's
such a faithful wife!"

One day this little woman felt sadly worn and
tired;
She could n't labor for the rest, although she
still desired.
They bore her tenderly to bed; she weakened
by degrees,
And the house seemed half deserted with no
"Mother, won't you please —

"Won't you please?" — The words unspoken
Yet she heard in fitful dreams,
As they knew by many a token,
By the fever's prattled themes,

Till one morn the great white angel took her
gently to his breast,
Whispering softly, "You have labored. Lo, I
give to you my rest."

Lays for Little Chaps

Once she sighed, "How will they — manage?"
Then she faded out of life.
She was such a loving mother and was such a
faithful wife.



Sometimes I close my eyes and try to dream of
her at rest,
And finding life is easy in the country of the
blest ;
But it's difficult to fancy, for in those white
courts of ease
Ofttimes, I judge, in dreams she hears, "Now,
mother, won't you please —

The Loving Mother

“ Won't you step down here a minute ;
They can spare you up that way ?
Here 's this work ; I can't begin it —
I am needing you to-day.”

Then, perhaps, she starts, and whispers to some
angel fair and white :

“ Oh, this resting's pleasant, pleasant ; it is
sweet, but is it — right ? ”

For how can she in a moment break the habit
of a life ? —

She was such a loving mother and was such a
faithful wife.



THE DESPOT KINGS

DO you know of the Despot Kings that
stray
Out of the Land of the Far-Away
Into the Country of Now and Here,
Despots and tyrants all, but dear?
Do you know the blink that means, "Obey!"
And the midnight clamor that brings dismay
To the subjects forlorn, who nathless spring
To do the will of the Despot King?

Bundle of wriggles and wails and twists;
Vacant of face and eye;
Helplessly beating with Lilliput fists —
Who doth the Kings defy?

The Despot Kings

Once I was fief to a Despot King,
And my heart bowed down like a broken
thing,

For he ordered me out when the night was
chill,

And I said, "I will not;" and he said, "You
will!" —

Oh, spare me the tale that is old, so old,
For ever and aye till the stars grow cold
The children of men must tribute bring
To the midnight throne of a Despot King.

Scanty in wisdom and strong of lung ;
Living to sleep and cry ;
Standing the pygmies and elves among —
Who doth the Kings defy ?

Once I was fief to a Despot King,
But the hours and the Seasons onward swing ;
And out of my life he passed one day,
And the world was dark, and its skies were
gray ;

And now at the last I know full well
That all of peace for my soul did dwell
In the baby voice that made me spring
To do his bidding, my Despot King.

Lays for Little Chaps

Fair as a lily ; white and wee ;
Holding my heart in thrall ;
Oh, ghosts of the long dead years, to me
My Despot King recall.



I Wish I Was an Engineer



I WISH I WAS AN ENGINEER

I WISH I was an engineer. I guess I'd
like to stand
In the cabin of an engine, with a thing-
umbob in hand,
And when I'd pull that thingumbob the engine
then would go
Out, out into the night-time when the stars is
hangin' low ;
I'd see the lights of houses goin' gleamin' gleamin'
in' past,

Lays for Little Chaps

Like a last-campaign percession when it's
walkin' middlin' fast ;
And then I'd pull the whistle-string an' hear
the engine say :
“ Hey, there ! you little mites of men, you'd
better clear the way ! ”
I would n't mind just loads of black upon my
face and clothes
If I could be an engineer, the land o' goodness
knows !

I wish I was an engineer. Then boys would
look at me,
An' say : “ Hey, Jimmy, here's de chap wot
runs de engine. See ! ”
An' then I'd pull the whistle-string an' never
smile a bit
When that big noise would scare the boys
almost into a fit,
Because I'd know, as engineers, I guess, 'most
always do,
That if a noise scares little boys, they're apt to
like it, too.
Just whiskin' through a hundred towns, straight
onward hour by hour,
While all the time the ceaseless “ chug ” beats
out the Song of Power ;

I Wish I Was an Engineer

Oh, you will talk admirin' of your Kings and
Czars, maybe —
To be an engineer, you bet! were good enough
for me.



I wish I was an engineer, to sit there like a
Turk
An' smile to see the fireman sweat while doin'
of the work.
I s'pose that Emp'ers has a snap, to which, of
course, they 're born,
But if I was an engineer I'd look on them
with scorn.
Just sittin' in my cab up there and listenin' all
the time

Lays for Little Chaps

Unto the constant "chug-chug-chug," that
 ceaseless, mighty rhyme,
And knowin' that a hundred lives was trusted
 unto me,
I guess I'd feel a sense of power; I'd catch the
 music's key
And hear it singin' in my soul as down the
 world I'd go,
If I were but an engineer — But, then, I
 ain't, you know.

IT'S HARD
TO SAY

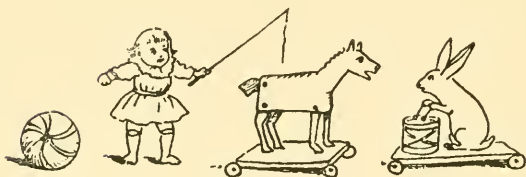


I MISS the patter-patter
Of the tiny little feet ;
I miss the prattled chatter ;
I miss the kisses sweet.
But I guess that Heaven 's lighter
For the babe I laid to rest,
And some angel's face is brighter
As she holds her to her breast.

I knew not how to spare her ;
E'en yet my heart is numb,
For life held nothing fairer —
Oh, wayward tears that come,
Perhaps the Father sought her
For His own home of light
Because He felt without her
No Heaven were perfect, quite.

Lays for Little Chaps

Sometimes from life's long battle
I turn, and sit a while,
And seem to hear her prattle
And see my darling's smile.
And then I say, "It's better.
She missed the weary fray
And Worry's chain and fetter ;"
But, oh, it's hard to say.



It's hard to say, for ever
My heart will listen still
For prattle sounding never,
For baby laughter's trill :
And where the shadows gather
I look to see her stand —
My darling with the Father —
And reach to take her hand.

I guess that Heaven's fairer
Because my babe is there,
But, oh, this life is barer,
With naught to lighten care.

It's Hard to Say

I try to say, "It's better,"
But, though my lips obey,
They speak but form and letter,
For, oh, it's hard to say.





A LITTLE,
LITTLE FELLOW

THERE 'S a little, little fellow, and he 's
really very small,
For he measures by my table and he
is n't quite so tall ;
And this little, little fellow in the evening
seeks my knees,
And he says: " Now won't oo tell me jus' the
nicest 'tories, p'ease ? "
And then I tell him stories that I would n't
dare to say
Are of the usual run of things we meet on
every day ;
And the last thing that he asks me is, with
story-telling through,
" Now does oo 'pose when I 'm growed up
I 'll know as much as oo ? "

A Little, Little Fellow

Oh, little, little fellow, who sit upon my knee,
I know how all misplaced is this, the faith you
rest in me.

My wisdom is a fiction, and my stock of knowl-
edge small ;

Like you, I guess the Father knows, and He is
over all.

I stumble on the journey, and I falter as I go,
And where the days shall lead me, I never,
never know.

But, though I'm all unworthy of your faith, it
cheers me, too,

With "Does oo 'pose, when I'm growed up,
I'll know as much as oo?"

Oh, little, little fellow, I really hope you will.
I want to feel when I leave off you'll be ad-
vancing still ;

And if sometimes I half have seen a light be-
yond the mist,

I trust that by its purest rays your pathway
may be kissed.

But, whatso'er the years may bring, and what-
soe'er their lore,

Someway I'm hoping here to-night, as I have
hoped before,

Lays for Little Chaps

That you may keep some part, at least, of faith
in me you knew
When oft you asked if "When I'm growed I'll
know as much as oo."





THE BABY'S FAITH

WE stood the other night before
The little cottage that is home.
I listened to her baby lore
About the stars in yonder dome.
'T was baby prattle, yet I guess
Perhaps she knows as much as I —
This side she knows a little less,
But more of things beyond the sky.

Then, while she prattled on, a star
A-sudden gleamed adown the world,
As if some angel from afar
A lance of flame had earthward hurled ;
And baby looked, with sagest nod,
As if to say : " I see — I see ;"
Then smiling said : " I dess 'at Dod
Is frowin' stars down here to me."

Lays for Little Chaps

And then she paused. A mighty thought
Was struggling in her baby mind:
Suppose such fusillade were fraught
With danger, as she half opined,
What then? what then? At this "suppose"
The blue eyes wide and wider grew;
Then faith spoke out: "I dess Dod knows
He won't hurt baby — now don't 'oo?"



Oh, little one, my little one,
Give me the faith so wholly thine.
When life's skies darken and the sun
Is hidden from this soul of mine,
And when God's missiles from His
sky

Rain on my life-path, blazing, all,
Let faith to doubting then reply:

"No harm from Him shall e'er befall."

And little one, my little one,
If this sweet faith may ne'er be mine;
If still through fog of doubt I run
And fear to trust the love divine,
Yet none the less for you I pray —
The heart speaks, though the lips be dumb —
That Faith through all life's strife may say:
"From Him, from Him no harm shall come."

When Brother Stiggins Come to Tea



WHEN BROTHER STIGGINS COME
TO TEA

WHEN Brother Stiggins come to call,
he gen'ly stayed to tea ;
An' ma would wash our faces all, an'
frecuen'ly spank me,
An' then she 'd say, " You mus' be good, an' set
still in your cheer,
An' not ask twice fer things to eat when Brother
Stiggins's here."
An' then we 'd go to table, an' the parson, he 'd
ask grace,
An' 'bout that time my brother, he would make
an orful face ;

Lays for Little Chaps

Then I 'd jus' snicker, an' my ma — you ort her
look to see,
When Brother Stiggins come to call, an' when
he stayed to tea.

I s'pose the grace he allers said wus full ten
minutes long,
An' all the time his voice would sound a good
deal like a song.
He 'd ask the Lord to kindly heed the heathen
in distress
Who can't git chicken-pie like ours, an' other
things that bless.
An' then he 'd say: "Ef 't ain't too much, jus'
bless our Congress, too ;
We know, dear Lord, there ain't a thing that
You hain't power to do ;
An' bless us common folks —" An' then my
brother, he 'd hunch me,
An' 'neath the table we would fight, when he
had come to tea.

An' then he 'd say: "Dear Lord, forgive these
wicked little boys
Who seem possessed, by Satan's power, to make
a dretful noise.

When Brother Stiggins Come to Tea

Oh, let them not go down in wrath to wicked-
ness an' sin,
An' 'specially, dear Lord, forgive the one that
kicked my shin."
An' when that grace was ended, then my ma
would leave her place,
An' say, "Excuse me w'ile I 'tend to these here
younguns' case."
An' then she'd take us to the shed, my brother
Joe an' me,
An' argue with us with a strap, when he had
come to tea.

I don't blame ma ; I never did. We'd act like
all possessed ;
An' course it's wrong to make a row when
things is bein' blessed ;
An', too, it's right to ask a grace, fer grace is
what we need
To git along with folks we meet an' not run all
to seed.
But, still, consid'rin' that us boys was pretty
middlin' young,
An' seein' that the parson's prayer was mighty
nearly sung,

Lays for Little Chaps

I now contend, an' allers shall, although per-
haps I'm wrong,
When Brother Stiggins come to tea his grace
wus too blamed long.





HER FAITH NEVER FALTERS

MY little daughter comes to me,
And whispers, "I am sorry;"
And I — I take her on my knee
And tell her not to worry;
And then I kiss her, and she knows
How tenderly I love her.
We're just two children, I suppose;
I not a whit above her.

And then she lays her cheek to mine,
And says, "I love you dearly;"
And in my eyes the teardrops shine —
My heart *will* act so queerly.
She says, "My papa is so good,"
Though I'm unworthy of her.
Dear little type of maidenhood,
I love her, oh, I love her.

Lays for Little Chaps

I think sometimes I 'd like to go
And tell her, " I am sorry,"
For, oh, my feet do falter so
'Mid life's unending worry.
Dear, loyal heart! Suppose I should,
(I have done so — or nearly)
She 'd only say: " My papa's good.
I love him, oh, so dearly."

So, 'mid the storm of life and years,
My little daughter's kisses
And loyal faith have dried my tears,
And cares exchanged for blisses.
And, as I write, if tears will start,
They're tears of gladness merely,
For these words bless my weary heart:
" I love my papa dearly."





WHEN MOTHER CALLED

MOTHER used to come and say :
“Come little boy ; it ’s time to rise.
Wake right up without delay ;
Shake yourself, and rub your eyes.”

An’ I ’d say : “Huh ! Wha—Ye-e-es,” and
then —

Go right off to sleep again.

Soon she ’d come again and say,

Just as gently as before :

“Wake, and see this lovely day.

Don’t go to sleep, dear, any more.”

An’ I ’d say : “Yes — I’m — coming ;” then —

Go right off to sleep again.

Lays for Little Chaps

Did n't matter though ; no less
Patient, gentle, kind was she
When she came and said : " I guess
My little boy asleep must be."
An' I said : " I'll — get — up," and then —
Went right off to sleep again.

Then my father came to call.
'T was but little that he said ;
Just one word, and that was all,
Just one word, and that, "*Al-fried!*"
Just one word, you see, but then —
I did n't go to sleep again.



Just that difference!
But, you see,
I've been thinking,
here alone,
Could my mother now
call me
In the gentle, loving
tone
Of the past, I'd wake,
and then —
I would n't go to
sleep again.



THE SONG OF SONGS

WRITE me a song," said the Master,
"that shall ring through the halls
of time ;

A song that shall thrill my children and urge
them to deeds sublime."

So the poet touched his wonderful harp and
sung in a minor key

How out of Earth's care, and its travail, the
soul rises pure and free ;

How under the face of laughter there throbbeth
the heart of pain,

Yet he who doth battle and conquer, the
heights of the blest shall gain.

He sang of the lesson of sorrow, the meaning
of trouble and tears,

Lays for Little Chaps

And the guerdon that comes to the faithful
after the strife of years.
But the Master stood unmoved.

Then the poet struck his harp again, a wild,
triumphant lay
That told of the nations' battles, their ceaseless
strife and fray ;
And through it one saw the armies as they
marched and countermarched,
And heard the groans of the dying, the gurgle
from lips pain-parched.
Then he told in a sweeter, gentler strain that
ravished the listening ear
How the dear God loves His children, and cares
for their struggles here,
And how He will guide and lead them, after
the toil and strife,
Gently, oh, gently upward to the wonderful
Hills of Life.
But the Master stood unmoved.

Then the poet's soul was weary, and he sung
of the brood of care
Who dwell in the haunts and purlieus, with
Want as a spectre there ;

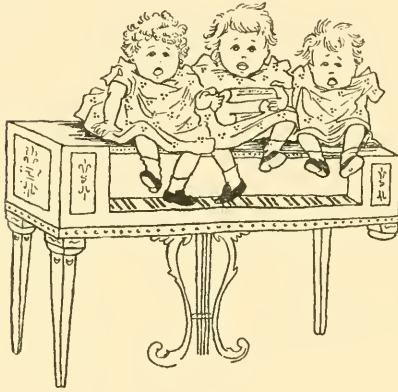
The Song of Songs

And the song that he sang was tragic; it
sobbed with a chord of pain
For the haunted, the starved, the weary, whose
tears fall down like rain;
And under the throbbing music was a male-
diction heard
For those who have wronged His children, and
eyes with tear-drops blurred.
There was loathing and stern abhorrence for
these, the favored few,
Who heed not the old, old message: Do as
ye 'd have them do.
But the Master stood unmoved.

And then through the open doorway stole the
sound of a childish voice,
Ringing in happy laughter, making the soul
rejoice,
And the poet caught its music, for the laughter
was dear to him,
And his heart breathed out its story, though
his eyes with tears were dim;
And, oh, the wonderful music! It reached to
the blue sky's dome,
Telling of peace and gladness in the beautiful
Land of Home,

Lays for Little Chaps

Of the dear little feet that patter, of the lips
that our own caress —
For the poet forgot his heartache when his
little one came to bless.
And the Master's eyes were dim.





A SONG FOR THE BABIES

NOW here is a song for the babies, who
Are dreadfully puzzled just what to
do

With their ten little fingers and ten little toes,
Their two little ears, and their one little nose,
And their queer little mouth, down under their
eyes,

Which they open to laugh, and straightway it
cries,

To the total surprise, and the wonder and
doubt

Of the wee little babies I'm singing about.

Lays for Little Chaps

A song for the babies who lie and blink,
And really imagine they 're trying to think,
Thinking of things they can't understand,
Of why they can't eat each chubby, fat hand ;
For they eat it, and eat it — it cuts such a
“ figger ” —

And the more that they eat it, the more it
grows bigger ;
And this is enough, past a question or doubt,
To puzzle the babies I 'm singing about.

A song for the babies who laugh and coo
As only a baby knows how to do,
And they talk in a language none understand
Save those who have travelled in Babyland ;
And the ones who have travelled, the babies
know,

Are only the mammas who love them so ;
Though sometimes a papa can half make out
The coo of the babies I 'm singing about.

A song for the babies — God bless them all,
So pitiful helpless, so daintily small ;
Who only can wonder what all is about,
The hurry and bustle, the worry and doubt ;

A Song for the Babies

Who only can wonder, and never can know
Till dawnlight has faded and morning dews go.
The babies, whose laughter sets trouble to
rout —
God bless the wee babies I'm singing about.





THE LITTLE BOY WHO SAW SANTA
CLAUS

THE chimney was so narrow, and the
chimney was so small,
And Santa Claus had grown so fat
through summer and the fall,
That when he brought his Christmas pack to
give the youngsters cheer
He just looked at that chimney, and he said:
“ Oh, dear ! Oh, dear ! ”

The Little Boy who saw Santa Claus

And little Willie Wiggins, who was listening
in his bed,
Was very sorely troubled for he heard what
Santa said,
Till a pleasant thought came to him, and a
happy smile he wore
As he said: "I guess I'll invite him if he won't
come in the door."

So little Willie Wiggins, in his little nightdress,
crept
From out the cosy nest in bed where mamma
thought he slept;
And the little bare feet pattered across the
frozen floor;
And the little fingers fumbled at the cold lock
of the door;
And the bolt squeaked out in anger: "I will
never ope, because —"
Just then the door flew open wide, and there
stood Santa Claus!
Such a funny, funny fellow, and with such a
cheery grin,
And Willie's heart went pit-a-pat as he said:
"P'ease come in."

Lays for Little Chaps

Then Santa Claus stepped back and tied his
reindeer to a post,
While Willie stood beside the door and froze
and froze, almost.
His face just beamed with laughter as straight-
way he came back ;
And you should have seen the presents in his
lovely, lovely pack !
And he picked up Willie Wiggins and hid him
in his coat,
And Willie merely said, " My-ee ! " his pleasure
to denote.
He really was so happy that he could n't well
say more
At sight of all the presents Santa spread upon
the floor.

Then Santa kissed him gently, and said : " Why,
bless your heart !
It 's getting very, very late ; I fear that I must
start,
For I 've many, many presents for a million
children more,
Where the chimneys are not narrow, as I ascer-
tained before."
Then he hurried through the doorway, and he
scampered to his sled ;

The Little Boy who Saw Santa Claus

And Willie heard the sleigh-bells as he pattered
off to bed,
And in his dreams throughout the night he
wore a smile, because —
He was the only little boy who e'er saw Santa
Claus.





SHE'S GONE
AWAY

LIKE to take her in my arms ;
Like to soothe her as I did,
Shielding her from wee alarms,
On my loving bosom hid ;
Wish that I could hear her voice
Ringing out in baby play,
Calling on me to rejoice ;
But I can't — she 's gone away.

Sorry that sometimes I said,
“ Do go 'way ! You bother me.”
Now there 's quietness instead.
And I long to bothered be.

She's Gone Away

Why, I'd give the best I know
Just to hear her romp and play,
And I'd let my writing go,
But I can't — she's gone away.

There were roses, great an' small,
In her hand that day — that day ;
She the sweetest bud of all —
And she bothered me ! I say ;
Used to bother me ! when I,
I would give the daylight's grace
Just to hear her romping nigh,
Making riotous the place.

House is very quiet now,
Very orderly and neat,
Toys not lying anyhow,
Pitfalls for my careless feet ;
No one comes to worry me
In my work, though
oft forbid,
Clam'rous for a throng-
ing knee,
But I wish — I wish
she did.





OH, LITTLE WEE MAIDEN

OH, little wee maiden, who sit and sing,
Rocking yourself in a rockaby chair,
What do the elfins who lazily swing
On beams of the sunlight whisper you
there?

What do they whisper, that straight from your
heart,

A smile, creeping upward, illumines your
eyes?

What do they weave in their magical art
From gossamer strands that they steal from
the skies?

Dreams of the future, castles that stand
In the beautiful world of a far-away land ;
Castles of crimson and purple and gold ;
Dreams that the wonderful morrows enfold.

Oh, Little Wee Maiden

Oh, little wee maiden, the elfins take
The gold of the sunset, the crimson of skies
That blush into sleep ere the morning shall
wake
The world, oh, the world that is weary and
wise ;
And the gold and the crimson they build into
dreams,
Into castles of splendor your eyes to delight ;
And the moonlight or starlight still sparkles
and gleams
On jewels God strikes from the bosom of
night.

Sheen of the moonlight on diamonds of dew,
All shining bright, little maiden, for you.
All of the morrows still reaching away
Nothing can bring like the dreams of to-day.

Oh, little wee maiden, your song sinketh low,
For the fairies of dreamland are calling,
And soon shall my little one drowsily go
Where the sleeptide is rising and falling ;
And the elfins that swing on a tremulous
beam,
The last of the day that is dying,

Lays for Little Chaps

Kiss hands to you still in the vanishing gleam.
“Good night” and “Good night” they are
sighing.

Elfins will go and the dream fairies stay ;
This it is comes at the close of the day.
So come to me, little one, e'en as I write ;
One sweet kiss, my darling ; one more and
— good night.





THE POOR LITTLE BIRDIES

THE poor little birdies that sleep in
the trees,
Going rockaby, rockaby, lulled by
the breeze ;
The poor little birdies, they make me feel
bad,
Oh, terribly, dreadfully, dismally sad,
For—think of it, little one ; ponder and
weep —
The birdies must stand when they sleep, when
they sleep ;

And their poor little legs —
I am sure it is so —
They ache, and they ache,
For they 're weary, you know.

Lays for Little Chaps

And that is the reason that far in the night
You may hear them say, "Dear-r-r!" if you
listen just right,
For the poor little birdies that sleep on the
bough
Would like to lie down, but they do not know
how.

Just think of it, darling ; suppose you must
stand
On your wee brown legs, all so prettily
planned ;
Suppose you must stand when you wanted to
sleep,
I am sure you would call for your mamma and
weep ;
And your poor little legs, they would cramp, I
have guessed,
And your poor little knees, they would call for
a rest ;

And you 'd cry, I am sure,
For so weary you 'd be,
And you 'd want to lie down,
But you could n't, you see ;

The Poor Little Birdies

And that is the reason why we should feel
bad
For the poor little birdies, who ought to be
glad,
For they want to lie down as they sleep on the
bough ;
They want to lie down, but they don't know
how.





GIVE ME
THE FABLES

GIVE me the fables, the old folk-lore
Of the beautiful, mythical time,
When I dreamed that the world was
bright before
And its hills were easy to climb ;
When Santa Claus came — I knew that he
did —
My quota of presents to leave,
And his sleigh-bells jingled my dreams amid,
On the wonderful Christmas Eve.

Give me the fables — Oh, never a doubt
Puzzled my sister and me ;
We were certain that Santa was roaming with-
out,
And we laughed in our infantile glee

Give Me the Fables

Till mother came softly, and said: "You must
sleep,
For Santa won't come till you do."
Oh, that was a statement to make the flesh
creep,
So we tried hard to sleep — would n't you ?



Give me the fables. Don't tell me our bliss
Was wholly a fanciful thrill,
For the morning brought proof of his visit, I
wis,
Though you may dispute if you will.
The engine that tooted, the ball that we threw,
Till it landed the china amid —
If Santa Claus brought not these gifts to us
two,
Will you please just to mention who did ?

Give me the fables. Gray phantoms, at best,
Are the things that we label as real ;
Our gold endures not in the ultimate test,
And fame is a mocker, we feel.

Lays for Little Chaps

But the cheer and the joy of the girl and the
boy —

Oh, Life, you have taught me this:
While others may grasp at your shining alloy,
I will hold to the fable of — bliss.

A Song for the Little Chaps



A SONG FOR THE LITTLE CHAPS

HERE is a song for the little chaps,
The little wee fellows who don't
know why
The round world turns; and I guess, perhaps,
That neither do you and neither do I.
Here is a song for the comical mites,
Round and rosy and fat and sleek,
Who gaze in amaze on the world's queer sights;
And here is the blessing I cannot speak.

Here is a song for the ones that gaze
In queer consternation on finger and toe,
And note they are moving in speechless amaze,
And wonder who wound them and made the
things go.

Lays for Little Chaps

The dear little fellows who deem mother's
breast

Is all of the world, and a good world, too,
I am singing to them, while they lie at rest ;
And really what better is there to do ?

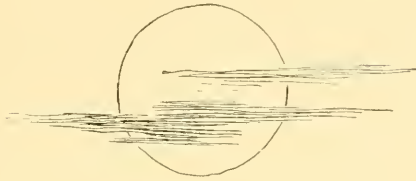
Here is a song for the babes that stand

Nearer to God than the grown folk do ;
Fresh little buds from the Heaven-land
Who deem that the world is fair and new.

Bundles of helplessness, dearer than all
Yet born of the morning and kissed by its
dew ;



Feeble and wondering, blinking
and small,
Babes whom I love, I am sing-
ing to you.



WHEN EVEN COMES

WHEN the even comes and the angels
light
Their lamps in the fields of heaven ;
When the wee birds twitter : “ Good night,
good night ;
It is rest time and nest time — ’t is even,”
Oh, then to their mothers the children creep,
For the poor little bodies are weary ;
And they sing them and croon them all soundly
asleep :
“ Oh, sleep thee, my dearie, my dearie.
“ Sleep thee, darling, sleep thee well ;
Rock upon the Sleep Sea swell,
Lost each baby sorrow.
Rest and peace press down thine eyes ;
Angels guard thee from the skies —
Thou shalt wake to-morrow.”

Lays for Little Chaps

When the even comes and our labor's done,
And we're worn with our life's endeavor ;
When faint is the light of our setting sun,
And our hands are enfolded forever,
Oh, then to our Father we children creep,
For our hearts are so weary, so weary,
And we hear His low voice through the life-
giving sleep :

“ Oh, rest thee, my dearie, my dearie.

“ Rest thee, darling, rest thee well ;
Here do love and blessing dwell,
Lost each childish sorrow.



Lo, I hold thee to
my breast ;
Rest thee, dear
one, sweetly
rest —
Here is Life's
to-morrow.”



AT THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA

DO you think you'd like to be at the
bottom of the sea,
With the pollyhinkus swinging all
around,
And the gogglers, with their eyes big as
mamma's custard pies,
And the winkus that goes crawling on the
ground,
And the sry,
(Oh, my eye!)
The sry, sry, sry,
The very, very, very, very, sry springaree
That slides through the glare of the water
everywhere
On the shifting, lifting bottom of the deep
blue sea?

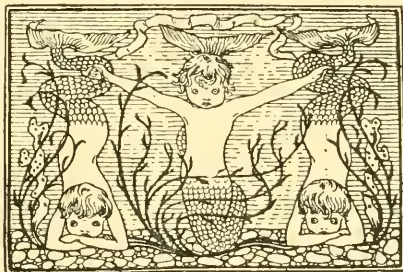
Lays for Little Chaps

At the bottom of the sea there is strangest
mystery,
For the queen of all the sprites is living
there,
With amber beads for eyes, and she lives on
oyster fries,
And she hates to hear the wicked sailors
swear ;
And her hair,
It is fair ;
It is fair, fair, fair ;
It is very, very, very, very, very bright and
fair ;
And the fishes swim about through her
palace in and out,
Through the shifting, lifting water that is
everywhere.

But I want to tell you, dear, and I hope that
you will hear,
That really it is better to be living on the
ground,
Where the sights are not so queer, but the
atmosphere is clear,
And in order to enjoy it 't is n't needful to
be drowned ;

At the Bottom of the Sea

For you know
(It is so,
And you should know, know)
It is really, really chilly where the dim depths
be ;
And it's surely very tough, yes, it certainly
is rough,
For you can't breathe a little in the deep blue
sea.





DOROTHY'S
WISDOM

DOROTHY'S the baby; she's but a
tiny tot,
But, oh, she knows so many things
that I have long forgot.
She knows the thrill of laughter; she knows
its music, too,
And when her cheery voice rings out I listen —
would n't you?

I listen, half-way smiling, and then it seems to
me
She knows just what the heaven is, and I've
forgot, you see.
But one thing she knows better, e'en better
than the rest;
She knows — ah, well she knows it — that her
mother loves her best.

Dorothy's Wisdom

I write it half in envy, for she is dear to me,
And so I show her pictures as she sits upon my
 knee ;
And I try to tell their stories in the words at
 my command.
While she offers sage suggestions that I cannot
 understand.
I listen to her chatter just to learn what she
 may tell ;
I lay my siege unto her heart and think I'm
 doing well,
And, even as I think it, she leaves her throne
 of rest
And toddles to her mother, the one that loves
 her best.

Oh, Dorothy, my baby, I think perhaps you're
 right :
There is no love like mother-love this side the
 land of light.
Though scanty be your knowledge of the path
 that you must tread
And though it be but baby lore that fills your
 little head,
Your wisdom is the highest when you seek your
 mother still

Lays for Little Chaps

And deem her safest refuge from your every
baby ill.

I know that you are sagely right, yet grant my
one request :

If mother-love be best of love, please count
mine second best.





THE TEACHER KNOWS

ONE time my teacher said, says she :
“ It’s no use talkin’ ; seems to me
That you’re the worse boy that I’ve
got ;

You’re worser than the rest, a lot.
I’ve whipped you, an’ I’ve scolded, too ;
Don’t make no difference what I do,
You keep right on jus’ zif I’d not.
Ain’t you the worst boy that I’ve got ? ”

Lays for Little Chaps

An' then my teacher said, says she :
" Your case is always puzzlin' me.
Now don't you know it hurts me, too,
When scoldin' or a-whippin' you ?



I always want you to be good
An' actin' like a nice boy should,
Because I love you." — Then she sighed,
An' I — I — well, I up an' cried.

Since then my teacher's gone away,
An' I don't go to school an' play,
An' study some, 's I used to do
Before my schoolin' days was through.

The Teacher Knows

But still my Teacher says, says He :
“ I ’m teachin’ you as seems to me
Is best ; with sorrow’s sting an’ blow
I ’m teachin’ you the way to go.”

An’ then my Teacher says, says He :
“ If only you ’ll look up to me
Through eyes bedimmed with trouble’s rain,
You ’ll learn the lesson hid in pain,
An’ know, though cruel seems the blow,
’T was dealt because I love you so.”
An,’ though I ’m weary an’ oppressed,
I guess my Teacher knows the best.



SWIMMING ISN'T WHAT IT WAS

OH, swimming is n't what it was ;
The times have changed since when
I used to swim six times a day,
And then — go in again.
I did n't need a bathing suit
In those old days of glee ;
The bathing suit that nature gave
Was good enough for me.

Swimming Isn't What It Was

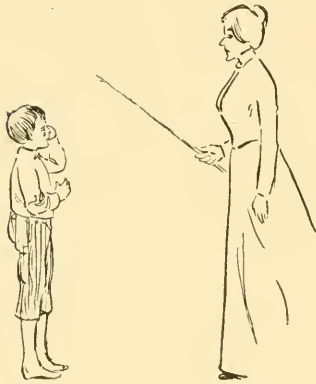
And if one did n't like the buff,
 Why, this thing can be said :
The sun was always good enough
 To partly paint it red.
The boys don't duck me as they did
 When I was three feet high,
Nor dive beneath and pinch my legs —
 Will some one tell me why ?

No more when I a swim have had
 My mother says to me,
“ You 've been in swimming, you bad boy ;
 Your hair is wet, I see.”
And I don't tell her as I did,
 With heart inclined to thump,
“ No, ma'am, I have n't swimm'd at all ;
 I wet it at the pump.”

Ah, times have changed ; the stingful switch
 No more is on my hide,
As when my mother ascertained
 Her youthful son had lied.
She used to say : “ You 've been exposed
 To sickness all untold,
And this, I think, my little boy,
 Will drive away a cold.”

Lays for Little Chaps

And then she warmed me ! I recall
That scene through vistas dim.
She made it lively for a time ;
But, then — I had my swim !
Oh, golden days of long ago,
Come back, come back again,
For swimming is n't what it was ;
The times have changed since then.





MY FIRST AUTOGRAPH

OH, don't I remember — I guess that I do! —

When you asked me to write in your book?

The moon of December was piercing the blue,
And the eyes of the stars seemed to look,
As you stood in the shadow. Heigho! but the
world

Has gone whirling and whirling since then ;
But that was the night when the grass was
impearled

By the dewdrops asleep in the glen.

Oh, don't I remember — I certainly do! —

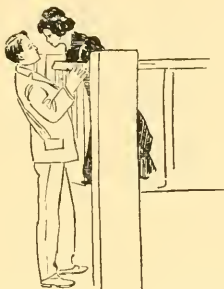
How I puzzled one-third of a night,
Till the last dying ember had fallen in two,
To make up my mind what to write?

Lays for Little Chaps

Then I wrote ('t was n't new) : "The rose it is
red,
And the meek little violet's blue,
And the pink, it is sweet," — it was thus that I
said —
" But not half so sweet as are you."

Oh, don't I remember — be sure that I do! —
The staggering couplet I wrote?
I could n't have claimed for a moment 't was
new —
'T was my mother who told me to quote.
But one thing I'll say, as I look through the
glow
Of the dawn, little maiden, to you :
Though I well might have written more sagely,
I know,
I could n't have written more true.





MY LITTLE VALENTINE

IF I could write a valentine
To please a little love of mine ;
If I could catch some knack of metre
To make her deem the music sweeter
Than song of birds,
The drone of bees,
The loo of herds,
The whisp'ring breeze.
Why, I would write this valentine
To please a little love of mine.

If I could write a valentine
All worthy of this love of mine,
Its tinkling words must sweetly beat
To rhythm of her tripping feet ;

Lays for Little Chaps

And it must reach
The perfect key
Of baby speech
That gladdens me ;
But, as such art were never mine,
I kiss, instead, my valentine.



Hushaby, Lullaby



HUSHABY, LULLABY

HUSHABY, lullaby, my little men ;
The Sandman comes, but he goes
again.

Hushaby, lullaby, wee little maids ;
The round world turns and it seeks the shades,
And Sleep comes stealing adown, adown,
And closes the eyes of blue or brown,
And he weaves his net and it holds you
thrall —

Hushaby, lullaby, little ones all.

Hushaby, lullaby. One little star
Is peeping adown from afar, so far
That its great white light is a slender beam
When it reaches the world where the babies
dream ;

Lays for Little Chaps

A slender beam that can only kiss
The wee little heads — for it came for this —
Ere it dies away in a glimmer small —
Hushaby, lullaby, little ones all.

Hushaby, lullaby. Life is a maze
Where blindly we wander through wearisome
days,
Through wearisome days when the spirit is
numb,
Till out of the shadows the little ones come ;
Then mothers stoop to them to kiss and caress,
And the souls of the fathers they gladden and
bless ;
For straight from the heavens God's angels
they call —
Hushaby, lullaby, little ones all.



When Baby Bloweth Kisses



WHEN BABY BLOWETH KISSES

WHEN baby bloweth kisses
From fingers pink and wee,
Like some sweet rain of blisses
To cheer my heart and me,
I care not then how utter
Or stern the day's demands,
While I watch the flutter, flutter
Of the waving little hands.

Lays for Little Chaps

When baby bloweth kisses
To me, upon the street,
She sometimes says : " Now zis is
A kiss 'at 's *very* sweet : "
And I tell her ere I leave her
'T was better than the rest,
And, faith ! I don't deceive her,
For each of them is best.

When baby bloweth kisses,
The bees that seek their store
In blossoms' pink abysses,
Might turn to her for more ;
And, oh, her laughter ringeth
Like some sweet fairy bell ;
And, oh, my old heart singeth
A song no words may tell.

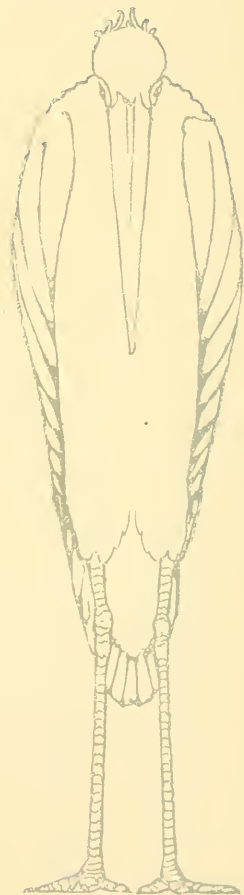
When baby bloweth kisses --
Ye men whose years increase,
While life the pathway
misses
To summer lands of
peace,
Now tell me if there lingers
Elsewhere a single bliss
To match the little fingers
That waft to you a kiss.



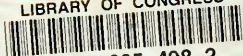


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